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CLAIMS

1. A method for fabricating a functional dental element, wherein a three-dimensional printing technique is used.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the shape and dimensions of the dental element are measured in a patient while using an optical scan
5 technique, preferably a laser technique.
3. A method according to claim 2, wherein the laser technique yields data about shape and dimensions in electronic form.
4. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein layers of a suitable material are successively applied onto each other, while
10 measures are taken, such that each layer adheres at desired positions to a preceding layer, and excess, non-adhering material is removed.
5. A method according to claim 4, wherein the suitable material is a powder and wherein the bonding between the layers is realized by means of a binder.
- 15 6. A method according to claim 5, wherein a computer is used for controlling, on the basis of the data obtained upon measuring, a print head which applies the binder to specific, desired positions.
7. A method according to claim 5 or 6, wherein the binder is selected from the group of colloidal silica, polyvinyl acetate (PVA), starch adhesives,
20 acrylates, polyvinyl alcohol, polyethylene oxide (PEO), ethylenevinyl acetate (EVA) and derivatives thereof.
8. A method according to claims 5-7, wherein the powder is selected from the group of ceramic materials, such as SiO_2 , Al_2O_3 , K_2O , Na_2O , CaO , Ba_2O , CrO_2 , TiO_2 , BaO , CeO_2 , La_2O_3 , MgO , ZnO , Li_2O and combinations
25 thereof, and metals, such as alloys of gold, platinum, palladium, nickel, chromium, iron, aluminum, molybdenum, beryllium, copper, magnesium, cobalt and tin, and combinations of metals and ceramic materials.

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9. A method according to any one of claims 5-8, wherein the layers are applied with a doctor blade.
10. A method according to claims 5-9, wherein the powder is applied in dispersed form.
- 5 11. A method according to claim 10, wherein in a layer, powders of a different nature are used.
12. A method according to claim 11, wherein in a layer, powders of a different color are used.
13. A method according to claims 10-12, wherein at least one layer
10 differs in composition from the others.
14. A method according to claims 11-13, wherein the powder is locally applied with a computer-controlled nozzle.
15. A method according to claims 5-14, wherein the dental element is sintered at a temperature of 400-800 °C for a period between 10 minutes
15 and 3 hours.
16. A method according to claim 15, wherein after sintering an infiltration with glass-ceramic or a polymer is carried out.
17. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the dental element is additionally shaped by grinding, filing, polishing,
20 sanding, blasting or treatment with a ball bed.
18. A dental element obtainable by a method according to any one of the preceding claims.